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**1 — What the Climate Report Says About the Impact of Global Warming, The New York Times, 11/3/17**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/03/climate/climate-change-impacts.html>

Global warming is affecting the United States more than ever, and the impacts — on communities, regions, infrastructure and sectors of the economy — are expected to increase. That's the gist of Volume II of the National Climate Assessment, a draft report made public that focuses on the current and future impacts of climate change.

**2 — Climate Change Report Predicts More Extreme Hurricanes, Newsweek, 11/4/17**

<http://www.newsweek.com/climate-change-report-predicts-more-extreme-hurricanes-trump-budget-proposal-701820>

A 500-page report on climate change released Friday dropped a heavy truth that most have probably already noticed: Climate change has likely caused the upward trend of hurricanes in the North Atlantic since the 1970s.

**3 — Louisiana aids Puerto Rico's hurricane recovery, but leaders say island faces long road ahead, Baton Rouge Advocate, 11/5/17**

[http://www.theadvocate.com/baton\\_rouge/news/politics/article\\_2c3cbe80-c248-11e7-be47-1b8510edcbae.html](http://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/politics/article_2c3cbe80-c248-11e7-be47-1b8510edcbae.html)

In the nearly seven weeks since Hurricane Maria slammed ashore Puerto Rico, causing widespread devastation across the U.S. territory, Louisiana has been sharing resources and assistance.

**4 — The Earth's ozone hole is shrinking and is the smallest it has been since 1988, New Orleans Times-Picayune, 11/5/17**

[http://www.nola.com/environment/index.ssf/2017/11/the\\_earths\\_ozone\\_hole\\_is\\_shrin.html#incart\\_river\\_index](http://www.nola.com/environment/index.ssf/2017/11/the_earths_ozone_hole_is_shrin.html#incart_river_index)

Here's a rare piece of good news about the environment: The giant hole in the Earth's protective ozone layer is shrinking and has shriveled to its smallest peak since 1988, NASA scientists said.

**5 — OPINION: EPA decision means more hazy skies for Texas, Houston Chronicle, 11/5/17**

<http://www.houstonchronicle.com/opinion/outlook/article/Bezanson-EPA-decision-means-more-hazy-skies-for-12333961.php>

Clean air regulations are complex and not everyone has the expertise to fully understand the numerous factors that affect our air. Yet, we can all tell the difference between a clear day and a hazy, polluted one. And we can all figure out that if the Environmental Protection Agency decides to allow more pollution, then there's going to be more of it.

**6 — Wrongful death lawsuit filed against company, pesticide provider in Balderas family poisoning, Amarillo Globe-News, 11/3/17**

<http://amarillo.com/local-news/news/crime-and-courts/2017-11-03/wrongful-death-lawsuit-filed-against-company-pesticide>

The parents of four children killed in an accidental poisoning at an Amarillo home in January have filed a wrongful death lawsuit against the maker of a pesticide that caused the deaths and also against the person who provided the chemical.

**7 — Cancer Patients Sue Roundup, Claim Ingredient Made Them Sick, CBS 11, 11/3/17**

<http://dfw.cbslocal.com/2017/11/03/i-team-cancer-patients-sue-roundup-claim-ingredient-made-them-sick/>

A popular weed killer is the target of multiple cancer lawsuits. The lawsuits claim the active ingredient in Roundup, known as glyphosate, causes cancer.

**8 — Coastal News Roundup: Lawsuits End, Settlements Reached, WWNO, 11/5/17**

<http://wwno.org/post/coastal-news-roundup-lawsuits-end-settlements-reached>

A local levee board's lawsuit against more than 90 oil and gas companies ends after bouncing around in the courts for several years. Plus, the EPA, the federal Department of Justice, and the State of Louisiana reach a settlement with Exxon Mobil, after claiming Exxon's facilities violated the Clean Air Act.

**9 — EPA chief Pruitt scheduled to meet privately with chemical industry executives, PBS, 11/3/17**

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/epa-chief-pruitt-scheduled-to-meet-privately-with-chemical-industry-executives>

The Trump administration's top environmental regulator is set to speak privately to chemical industry executives next week during a conference at a luxury oceanfront golf resort.

**10 — A water economy?, Santa Fe New Mexican, 11/5/17**

[http://www.santafenewmexican.com/life/home/a-water-economy/article\\_6f877294-04c4-55d8-be9c-c4c0083bb40b.html](http://www.santafenewmexican.com/life/home/a-water-economy/article_6f877294-04c4-55d8-be9c-c4c0083bb40b.html)

Some city in the United States will become the water-recycling capital of the country. Why not Santa Fe, New Mexico? This is a logical place to grow this industry. Santa Fe by necessity has a large need for recycled water.

## CLIMATE

# What the Climate Report Says About the Impact of Global Warming

By HENRY FOUNTAIN and BRAD PLUMER NOV. 3, 2017

The same, only worse.

Global warming is affecting the United States more than ever, and the impacts — on communities, regions, infrastructure and sectors of the economy — are expected to increase.

That's the gist of Volume II of the National Climate Assessment, a draft report made public on Friday that focuses on the current and future impacts of climate change. The draft will eventually accompany a report on the science of climate change that was unveiled by 13 federal agencies in its final form on the same day.

In addition to comments by members of the public, Volume II is being reviewed by an expert committee of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. After revisions by the agencies involved it is expected to be published in December 2018.

Like the scientific report, the draft of Volume II contains many of the same findings cited in the previous National Climate Assessment, published in 2014. But reflecting some of the impacts that have been felt across the country in the past three years, some of the emphasis has changed.

Here's a look at some of what's new in the draft assessment.

## Predicted impacts have materialized

More and more of the predicted impacts of global warming are now becoming a reality.

8

ARTICLES REMAINING

For instance, the 2014 assessment forecast that flooding in the coming years as sea levels rose. That's no longer theoretical: Scientists have now documented a record number of "nuisance flooding" events during high tides. In 2014, nearly half of residents in Hampton Roads, Va., could not get out of their neighborhoods at least once because of tidal flooding.

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Meanwhile, as the oceans have warmed, disruptions in United States fisheries, long predicted, are now underway. In 2012, record ocean temperatures caused lobster catches in Maine to peak a month earlier than usual — and the distribution chain was unprepared.

## A focus on air quality

While much of the discussion of climate change looks at the role of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in warming the planet, the draft report puts a renewed emphasis on the impacts of other atmospheric pollutants like ozone and smoke, which can cause respiratory problems and lead to premature death.

The draft notes with "high confidence" that climate change will increase ozone levels, as rising temperatures and changes in atmospheric circulation affect local weather conditions. But the increases will not be uniform; by near the end of the century the worst ozone levels will be found across a wide expanse of the Midwest and Northern Great Plains, while levels are expected to improve, at least somewhat, in parts of the Southeast.

The report reiterates what residents of the West have learned from hard experience: that warmer springs, longer dry seasons in the summer and other impacts are lengthening the fire season. The smoke from fires affects not only health, the report says, but visibility.

## Adaptation, adaptation, adaptation

Since 2014, more detailed economic research has estimated that climate change could cause hundreds of billions of dollars in annual damage, as deadly heat waves, coastal flooding, and an increase in extreme weather take their toll. Unless, that is, communities take steps to prepare beforehand.

The previous assessment warned that few states and cities were taking steps to adapt to the impacts of climate change. That's slowly changing, the new draft finds. More and more communities are taking measures such as preserving wetlands along the coasts to act as buffers against storms.

But outside of a few places in Louisiana and Alaska, few coastal communities are rethinking their development patterns in order to avoid the impacts from rising seas and severe weather that the report says are surely coming.

## Beyond borders

The United States military has long taken climate change seriously, both for its potential impacts on troops and infrastructure around the world and for its potential to cause political instability in other countries.

The draft report cites these international concerns, but goes far beyond the military. Climate change is already affecting American companies' overseas operations and supply chains, it says, and as these impacts worsen it will take a toll on trade and the economy.

Global warming and natural disasters are also affecting development in less affluent countries. That, the draft says, puts additional burdens on the United States for humanitarian assistance and disaster aid.

## It's all tied together

The draft report suggests a different approach to assessing the effects of climate change, by considering how various impacts — on food supplies, water and electricity generation, for example — interact with each other.

“It is not possible to understand the full extent of climate-related impacts in the United States without considering these interactions,” the report says.

It gives several examples, including recent droughts in California and elsewhere that, in combination with population changes, affects demand for water and energy. The draft also cites Hurricane Sandy, five years ago, which caused cascading impacts on interconnected systems in the New York area, some of which had not been anticipated. Flooding of subway and highway tunnels, for example, made it more difficult to repair the electrical system, which suffered widespread damage.

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A version of this article appears in print on November 4, 2017, on Page A11 of the New York edition with the headline: Damaging Floods, Filthier Air and Political Instability.

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# CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT PREDICTS MORE EXTREME HURRICANES BUT TRUMP BUDGET PROPOSAL STILL SLASHES FEMA

BY **SYDNEY PEREIRA** ON 11/4/17 AT 6:00 AM

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FEMA

A 500-page report on climate change released Friday dropped a heavy truth that most have probably already noticed: Climate change has likely caused the upward trend of hurricanes in the North Atlantic since the 1970s.

One scenario in the report—a collaborative effort by 13 federal agencies—found that tropical storms and hurricanes were going to become more intense, with higher wind speeds and more rainfall. The overall number of hurricanes or tropical storms won't necessarily increase.

The two-month mark is nearing or already passed for the three major hurricanes in the U.S. this year. Hurricane Harvey landed in Texas causing catastrophic flooding, Hurricane Irma devastated the Florida Keys and caused Barbuda to evacuate its entire population, and Hurricane Maria slammed Puerto Rico leaving nearly all of the island without electricity.

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Despite the report's findings about extreme weather, President Donald Trump's budget plan proposed to cut \$667 million from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's state and local grant funding. Since the original budget proposal was released in May, Congress has pushed back

passing a budget and it remains unclear whether the massive cuts to FEMA and other government agencies will come true.

But with the triple-hit to the U.S. this year from major hurricanes and wildfires in California, FEMA likely won't be able to manage more natural disasters with even less funding.

Congress is in the process of passing a \$36.5 billion bill for disaster relief from hurricanes and wildfires—the second bill after another \$15.25 billion bill was passed in September, reported *USA Today*. Various congress members expressed concern it wasn't enough relief for their respective interests. Trump, vocal on Twitter in his support for first responders, tweeted that they cannot stay in Puerto Rico "forever" in early October.



An aerial photo shows damage caused by Hurricane Harvey in Rockport, Texas, August 31, 2017.

## REUTERS

The report made note of Harvey, which broke the 11-year absence of major hurricane landfall in the U.S., dubbed the “hurricane drought.”

The verdict based on one study was that the drop-off was completely random. Another study found a relationship between increasing number of hurricanes and decreasing number of those that made



landfall in the U.S. Important to note, the study wrote, was how these findings were based on what defines "U.S. landfall," which is a "geopolitical-border-based constraint and has no physical meaning."

"In fact, many areas outside of the U.S. border have experienced major hurricane landfalls in the past 11 years," the report stated. "In this sense, the frequency of U.S. landfalling major hurricanes is not a particularly robust metric with which to study questions about hurricane activity and its relationship with climate variability."

Other extreme storm findings were that although tornado activity has decreased, on a given day with tornadoes, the number of them has increased.

There has also been a trend towards earlier snowmelt and a decrease in snowstorm frequency. Winter storm tracks have shifted north since 1950 in the Northern hemisphere as well.

"Atmospheric rivers" on the West Coast—which are narrow streams of moisture that are associated with flooding—will increase, the report concluded.

Weather is hotter than it has ever been in the history of modern civilization, sea levels have risen about three inches since 1993, and heat waves have become more frequent since the 1960s.

The key: Human activity is causing it.



**Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency Scott Pruitt stands after the swearing-in ceremony for US Ambassador to Canada Kelly Knight Craft in Washington D.C., September 26, 2017.**

## **REUTERS**

The *New York Times* pointed out the clear contradiction between this government report has with the White House's apparent position on climate change.

Trump has stated climate change is a hoax created by the Chinese and the EPA wiped the words "climate change" from its website. Trump then nominated energy industry associated Scott Pruitt as chief of the EPA, who has barred leading scientific experts from serving on advisory boards if they are receiving funding from the EPA for their research. There is no such requirement to avoid conflict of interest from advisors with ties to the energy industry.

Also this week: The nominee to lead NASA wouldn't acknowledge the scientific consensus on climate change.

[http://www.theadvocate.com/baton\\_rouge/news/politics/article\\_2c3cbe80-c248-11e7-be47-1b8510edcbae.html](http://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/politics/article_2c3cbe80-c248-11e7-be47-1b8510edcbae.html)

# Louisiana aids Puerto Rico's hurricane recovery, but leaders say island faces long road ahead

BY ELIZABETH CRISP | ECRISP@THEADVOCATE.COM NOV 5, 2017 - 6:41 PM



Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards, first lady Donna Edwards, Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rosselló and Toa Baja Mayor Betito Márquez walk through a neighborhood badly damaged by Hurricane Maria on Monday, Oct. 30, 2017.

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ADVOCATE PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CRISP

Elizabeth Crisp

In the nearly seven weeks since Hurricane Maria slammed ashore Puerto Rico, causing widespread devastation across the U.S. territory, Louisiana has been sharing resources and assistance.

After seeing the damage firsthand during a brief visit last week that included tours of some of the hardest-hit areas on the island, Louisiana's top disaster recovery leaders say that Puerto Rico is on a very long road to recovery.

"This is a long-term recovery — it's going to take a lot of money and a lot of resources," Maj. Gen. Glenn Curtis, the adjutant general of the Louisiana National Guard, said in a recent interview upon return from San Juan. "We in the continental United States don't need to get comfortable and let them slip away."

*Story Continued Below*

Louisiana has deployed to Puerto Rico members of the National Guard and disaster recovery officials, sent supplies and heavy equipment, and taken on a central role in developing a critical piece of its housing recovery plan.

"We've received so much help from other states, whenever we can we try to pay it forward and pay it back," said Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness executive director James Waskom, who also traveled to Puerto Rico.

For Louisiana, it's an all-too-familiar feeling.

"If you go back to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike — all the other states and territories came to the aid of Louisiana and helped us tremendously," Curtis said. "As a state, we owe U.S. citizens in other states and territories the same courtesy when disasters happen.

"They are American citizens, and if they are in a bad way, then it's our duty and responsibility to help take care of this," Curtis added.

Both Curtis and Waskom said one of the things that stuck out to them was the spirit of the Puerto Rican people. As they walked the streets of Toa Baja, just outside of San Juan, and Rincon, on the island's western coastline, children and adults came to the streets to greet the delegation, which included Gov. John Bel Edwards and representatives from the Puerto Rico governor's office.

"Their spirit and sense of resiliency was amazing to me. They were so appreciative of the help they are getting," Waskom said.



**Gov. John Bel Edwards returns after touring areas of Puerto Rico battered by Hurricane Maria**

States and U.S. territories share resources in times of disaster through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands have signed onto the mutual aid agreement, which was ratified by Congress in the 1990s.

Under the EMAC, Puerto Rico will pay Louisiana for all costs — Louisiana taxpayers aren't picking up the tab. After Puerto Rico pays the state, then its government can seek federal reimbursement through its FEMA cost-share agreement.

For example, it costs an average of about \$450 per soldier per day to have Louisiana Guard members deployed in Puerto Rico, according to the Governor's Office.

When Curtis and Waskom visited, many of the guardsmen had been in Puerto Rico for a month. While some were starting to head back to Louisiana, transportation has been uncertain. Many weren't sure exactly when they would be able to return home.

"They went for the right reasons, and that's to help those folks out," Curtis said. "They were sleeping on cots, didn't have much running water and eating MREs (military Meals Ready to Eat), but they understand the reality of where they are. They get it."

"They are great Americans — they are our soldiers and they know when it's time to take care of people," he added.

Louisiana had a similar agreement with Texas after Hurricane Harvey this year, with Louisiana National Guardsmen and law enforcement officials helping with floodwater rescues and other recovery efforts.



### **Gov. John Bel Edwards views hurricane-ravaged neighborhood in Puerto Rico, meets with leaders**

When a state experiences a declared disaster — man-made or natural — then the disaster assistance coordinators send a request out to their counterparts in other states. Waskom said he sees all of the requests and evaluates them on an individual basis for a variety of factors, including Louisiana's own risk during hurricane season and what various state agencies and some local say that they can temporarily spare. During protests over the Dakota Access Pipeline, deputies from St. Charles Parish provided assistance through the EMAC process, Waskom said. A request under consideration right now would have New Orleans firefighters providing assistance in Puerto Rico at some point.

Louisiana's known for having one of the leading EMAC coordinating teams in the country, he said.

After the request is received and vetted, the state responds with the details of what resources it can offer and how much it will cost.

Edwards joined Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rosselló for the launch of the Tu Hogar Renace, or STEP, homeowner assistance program that is modeled after the Shelter at Home program Louisiana implemented after catastrophic floods swept the state last year.

GOHSEP deputy director Will Rachal spent a month working with Puerto Rico housing leaders to develop the program and received special recognition during the news conference in Toa Baja at which the program was announced.

One of the biggest hurdles for Puerto Rico's recovery is getting the supplies needed to rebuild to the island and the potential increased costs associated with that. It's about 1,030 miles from Miami to San Juan. The port at New Orleans and access to the Mississippi River is about 1,700 miles from San Juan.



### **Gov. John Bel Edwards to travel to Puerto Rico for hurricane recovery efforts; aides arrived Sunday**

"That alone is going to drive up the costs that FEMA will spend," Waskom said. "All those resources have to get to the island some way."

Louisiana's Shelter at Home was met with mixed reviews after it was implemented in the wake of last year's historic floods. FEMA agreed to adjust the program to Puerto Rico's specific needs and to address concerns raised by Louisiana leaders to improve upon the program.

The price-per-household cap for Puerto Rico's program has been set at \$20,000, instead of the \$15,000 cap in Louisiana, largely because of anticipated transport needs. Additionally, homeowners may qualify for \$7,000 in solar panels or a generator because of the island's aging power grid.

Waskom said one of his other concerns is about the capacity for contractors in Puerto Rico or bringing them in from other areas. Louisiana's program had subcontractors from across the state and eventually hired some from out of state to meet the needs of Shelter at Home.

"Every disaster is different," Waskom said. "I've been in this business since before 2000. You have to look at a wide range of programs for recovery."

Waskom noted the impracticality of deploying manufactured housing units, commonly called FEMA mobile homes, to the island. FEMA spent about \$130,000 for the purchase, transportation and installation of each "manufactured housing unit" in Louisiana after the floods. More than 2,000 of them remain in use as flood victims continue to work toward permanent housing solutions.

"(Shelter at Home) is the cheapest out of the temporary shelter options," Waskom said. "We just think this is the most logical way to go."

Curtis, after seeing the impact of hurricanes and floods in Louisiana and neighboring Gulf Coast states, said he thinks that the nature of the construction of many homes he saw in Puerto Rico will ease the rebuilding process.

Unlike most homes here that have drywall interiors and wood or carpet flooring, the homes the Louisiana delegation toured in Toa Baja, which took on 8 feet of water in some places, were mostly made of concrete and stone.

"They are going to have a long way to go," Waskom said. "It was such a large storm, and to exacerbate that, it's an island, so getting things there is going to be a struggle."

Waskom said he was struck by the scale of devastation on the island. As his plane approached Puerto Rico on the evening of Oct. 28, much of the island was dark except pockets of light — the largest of which was San Juan.

"There's a long way to go," Waskom said.

Curtis echoed his concerns.



**Louisiana state-wide drive collects 100 pallets of donated items to send to hurricane-ravaged Puerto Rico**

"The electrical infrastructure is what concerns me probably the most," Curtis said. "How do you reestablish almost a complete power grid on the island of Puerto Rico? That's going to be a long-term project."

Curtis was also struck by the impact on the island's transportation infrastructure.

"You have to figure out how do you prioritize that and get the right equipment there to take care of it," he said.

Curtis, who has led the Louisiana National Guard since 2011, served as chief of staff for the Joint Forces Headquarters in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, after serving in Iraq.

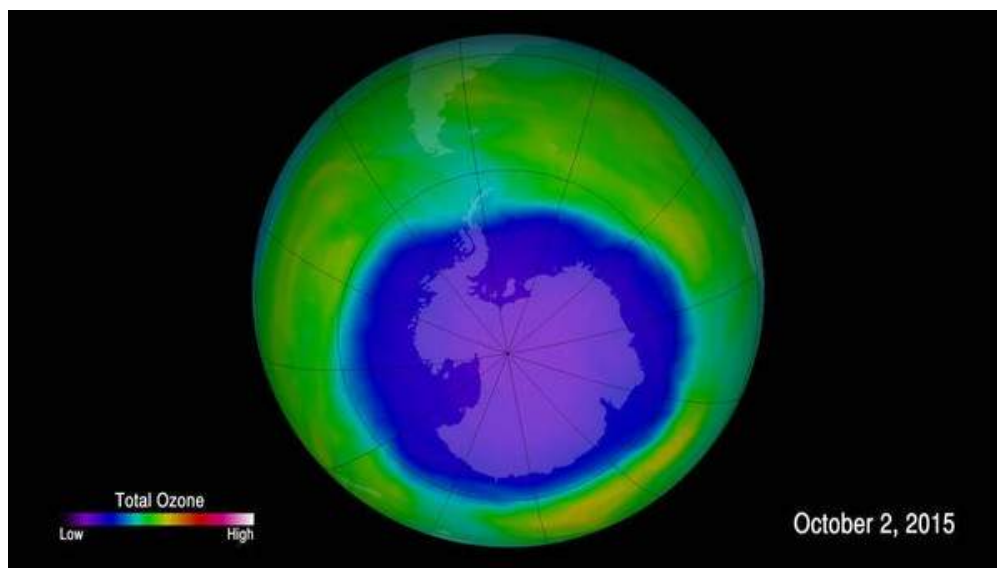
He said he was touched by the optimism toward recovery that he saw in Puerto Rico.

"They had such a positive attitude about where they are and where they are headed. That really struck a chord with me," Curtis said.

LOUISIANA ENVIRONMENT AND FLOOD CONTROL

## The Earth's ozone hole is shrinking and is the smallest it has been since 1988

Updated Nov 3;  
Posted Nov 3



This false-color image shows ozone concentrations above Antarctica on Oct. 2, 2015. (Photo by NASA, Goddard Space Flight Center.)(NASA)

**By The Washington Post**

Here's a rare piece of good news about the environment: The giant hole in the Earth's protective ozone layer is shrinking and has shriveled to its smallest peak since 1988, NASA scientists said.

The largest the hole became this year was about 7.6 million square miles wide, about two and a half times the size of the United States, in September. But it was still 1.3 million square miles smaller than last year, scientists said, and has shrunk more since September.

Warmer-than-usual weather conditions in the stratosphere are to thank for the shrinkage since 2016, as the warmer air helped fend off chemicals like chlorine and bromine that eat away at the ozone layer, scientists said. But the hole's overall reduction can be traced to global efforts since the mid-1980s to ban the emission of ozone-depleting chemicals.

"Weather conditions over Antarctica were a bit weaker and led to warmer temperatures, which slowed down ozone loss," said Paul A. Newman, chief Earth scientist at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland. "It's like hurricanes. Some years there are fewer hurricanes that come onshore . . . this is a year in which the weather conditions led to better ozone [formation]."



The news comes just after the 30th anniversary of the hole's discovery, which led to the 1987 Montreal Protocol - a landmark international agreement that led to major global efforts to phase out the use of ozone-depleting chemicals.

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Deterioration of the ozone layer was mainly taking place over Antarctica, and became a particular cause for concern for those living in the southern hemisphere. Ozone, a colorless gas, protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation, which could cause higher rates of skin cancer and cataracts disease, as well as disrupt plant growth, scientists say.

Scientists first realized chlorofluorocarbons were wearing down the thin ozone layer above Antarctica in the 1970s. From the mid-1980s and through the 1990s, the ozone hole became a worldwide sensation, with frightening connotations that led the public to support scientists' battle against its growth.

The public feared scientists' well-being at the South Pole, wondering if they would be burned by ultraviolet radiation while studying the hole that would blind them or damage their skin. Increased fears of skin cancer and the ozone hole further deteriorating spurred 24 nations to sign the Montreal Protocol upon its formation. That number eventually rose to 197.

It was a rare scientific agreement, scientists say, because it did exactly what it was supposed to do: galvanize action toward closing the hole in the ozone layer. Thursday's findings show the world is on track toward doing just that.

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"It's extremely rewarding, because it was originally just a scientific effort, and then we were able to convince society that it was a problem - here's what would happen if we do not deal with it," said chemist Mario Molina, who had an integral role in the discovery of the ozone hole and who was awarded a Nobel Prize for his research in 1995.

In 2014, scientists at the United Nations credited the recovery of the ozone layer to the phasing out of chemicals used in refrigerators, air conditioners and aerosol cans in the 1980s. But chlorofluorocarbons have long lifetimes, and could still float around in the atmosphere 100 years from now, Newman said. Scientists predict the ozone layer won't return to its 1980s form until about 2070, he said.

In June, scientists identified a possible threat to the recovery, believing dichloromethane - an industrial chemical with the power to destroy ozone - doubled in the atmosphere over the past 10 years. If its concentrations keep growing, it could delay the Antarctic ozone layer's return to normal by up to 30 years, according to the study published in the journal Nature Communications.

The ozone hole was largest in 2000, when it was 11.5 million square miles wide, according to NASA.

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# Bezanson: EPA decision means more hazy skies for Texas

By Janice Bezanson | November 5, 2017

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Photo: MICHAEL STRAVATO, STR

Steam comes from refineries near a gas station in Texas City in 2014. (Michael Stravato/The New York Times)

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On a clear day, you can see forever. On a hazy day, not so far.

Clean air regulations are complex and not everyone has the expertise to fully understand the numerous factors that affect our air. Yet, we can all tell the difference between a clear day and a hazy, polluted one. And we can all figure out that if the Environmental Protection Agency decides to allow more pollution, then there's going to be more of it.

And that's what the EPA has done. In a recent regional haze ruling, the EPA chose to allow more pollution, not less, filling Texas' skies with more haze. So, what is regional haze, and why should we care about it anyway?

Haze is a slight obscuring of the atmosphere, typically caused by very small particles suspended in the air – small, as in less than the diameter of a human hair. Sometimes it's dust or smoke. But pollution like the sulfur-dioxide emitted from coal-fired power plants can also drive haze.

As for why we should care: People with lung ailments care. They resist being outdoors on hazy days, unsure of whether the particles will make them sicker. People with allergies and asthma care. When air quality is bad, their symptoms are worse and their ability to engage in strenuous activities is limited. Haze may carry viruses that can cause flu and pneumonia. Children are particularly susceptible. When our ability to breathe freely is impacted, our risk of heart attack increases.

Haze also impacts our enjoyment of outdoor activities. Big Bend National Park - a crown jewel of Texas' outdoors - was a poster child for the effects of haze on our ability to enjoy its natural beauty. Our enjoyment of numerous other national parks has been diminished by days with unhealthy haze.

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## TRANSLATOR

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## LETTERS

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**Monday letters: Traffic lights, doctors needed, Houston Proud**



**Words matter on election ballots**

National parks are an important economic engine for the state, increasing tourism by hundreds of millions of dollars each year. In 2016, more than 5 million park visitors spent an estimated \$290 million in nearby communities, supported 4,400 jobs and generated more than \$410 million in output for the Texas economy.

The rollback of the regional haze rule is an effort to bolster the coal industry. Allowing more pollutants into our air is a conscious decision by the federal government based on an effort to "bring back jobs" to the coal industry.

But the main reason the coal industry is declining is because electrical utility companies, cities, businesses and homeowners are voluntarily choosing to purchase other kinds of energy. Giving the coal companies a pass on keeping our air clean isn't going to save the industry in the long run - but it is going to lower the quality of our air.

Although the private sector is demonstrating preferences for cleaner energy instead of coal, the government lags behind. Texas' elected officials have previously praised the forces of the marketplace, saying the government shouldn't pick winners or losers. But the federal government has put a big thumb on the scale in favor of coal while ignoring the direction of energy production in Texas.

The Energy Institute at the University of Texas at Austin describes Texas as "rapidly ramping up on solar, wind and natural gas, displacing coal in the process." Texans now get approximately 15 percent of their electricity from wind power. The market favors cheaper and cleaner natural gas and renewables, like wind and solar.

In the past weeks, Vistra Energy, owner of Luminant, announced the closing of three major Texas coal plants - Monticello, Big Brown and Sandow. Vistra said it was not economically feasible to continue to operate these plants. Major mining companies are withdrawing pending

**Bezanson: EPA decision means more hazy skies for**

**Texas**



**Parker: A generation of sexual misbehavior**



**Texas slush fund**

applications to mine coal on federal lands due to persistently weak market conditions. Changing the haze emission standards now will not revive the flagging industry.

Our nation's leaders need to listen to the market. We in Texas need to support the expanding production of clean energy that's boosting the state's economy. Let Texas and the market lead the way, so we can all breathe easier.

Bezanson is executive director of Texas Conservation Alliance.

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Posted November 3, 2017 12:49 pm - Updated November 3, 2017 12:59 pm

By ROBERT STEIN (/robert-stein-0)

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## Wrongful death lawsuit filed against company, pesticide provider in Balderas family poisoning





The parents of four children killed in a January accidental poisoning at a northeast Amarillo home in January have recently filed a wrongful death lawsuit. (Lauren Koski / Amarillo Globe-News)

The parents of four children killed in an accidental poisoning at an Amarillo home in January have filed a wrongful death lawsuit against the maker of a pesticide that caused the deaths and also against the person who provided the chemical.



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In a lawsuit filed in Potter County district court, Peter and Martha Balderas claim that United Phosphorus, an international agrochemical company, was negligent in the way it packaged Weevil-Cide — a fumigant, or gaseous pesticide.

The lawsuit claims the product did not include adequate bilingual instructions or warnings, which led to Peter Balderas — who does not read English — improperly spreading pellets of

the fumigant under his home for pest control.

The lawsuit also names ...  
failing to properly warn  
Weevil-Cide, but he was

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"This is one of the most horrible tragedies that I've seen practicing law. For a family to lose four children, ages seven to 17, it's just horrific," said the Balderases attorney, Kelly Puls.

"A company should be held accountable for proper warnings, and when they give certain warnings they should be warnings that everyone can understand."

United Phosphorus did not immediately respond to a request for comment Friday. A call to Ulloa for comment was unsuccessful, and his phone line appeared to be disconnected.

Authorities have said the father crawled underneath his home and attempted to wash away the Weevil-Cide, when the addition of water released toxic phosphine gas.

Four of the eight Balderas children died, and the remaining four were injured after inhaling the gas, the lawsuit says. Martha Balderas was taken to a hospital near death, the lawsuit says, but she survived.

According to the lawsuit, the Weevil-Cide's directions for use are solely in English and a label on the product's packaging did not have an adequate warning in Spanish.

"Balderas is a native Spanish speaker and does not read English," the lawsuit reads.

The lawsuit seeks compensatory and punitive damages, and it also seeks injury damages for the survivors. Two of the four surviving children are adults and two are minors.



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## I-Team: Cancer Patients Sue Roundup, Claim Ingredient Made Them Sick

November 3, 2017 10:15 PM By **Brian New**

Filed Under: [Angie Dyer](#), [Brian New](#), [cancer](#), [Farmer](#), [I-Team](#), [Monsanto](#), [Robin Greenwald](#), [roundup](#), [Scott Partridge](#), [Texas](#), [Weitz & Luxenberg](#)

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A popular weed killer is the target of multiple [cancer lawsuits](#). The lawsuits claim the active ingredient in Roundup, known as glyphosate, causes cancer.



"This is not about instilling fear in people," said plaintiff attorney Robin Greenwald of Weitz & Luxenberg. "But it is about people who have unfortunately fallen prey to Monsanto's weed killer and it's either killing them or causing them grave illness."

The only warning listed on a bottle of Roundup is that it may cause eye irritation. The State of California wants the warning to also include that it may cause cancer.

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A [report](#) from International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in 2015 found glyphosate is “probably carcinogenic to humans.” IARC is a division of the World Health Organization (WHO).

Monsanto, the maker of Roundup, refutes IARC’s report. The company told the CBS 11 I-Team IARC cherry-picked data to reach its finding and numerous other studies on glyphosate show no link between the herbicide and cancer.

“There is no medical evidence whatsoever that glyphosate causes cancer,” said Monsanto Vice President Scott Partridge. “I regret that these plaintiff lawyers have pointed them in that direction.”

### **Texas farmer blames Roundup for her rare cancer**

Two years ago, doctors diagnosed Angie Dyer with a rare form of cancer – Double hit large B-cell non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

“I couldn’t believe it,” said the Navarro County resident. “I was devastated.”

Intense chemotherapy has kept Dyer alive but it has taken a toll on her body. She now requires a cane to walk, cannot feel her feet, and her memory has deteriorated.

Dyer said she was forced to give up her nursing career of nearly twenty years.

“I was meant to be a nurse,” she said. “Some people are born into a profession, that was me,”

Dyer has been in remission for more than a year but said her doctors told her the cancer would likely come back someday with “vengeance.”

The hardest part, Dyer said, is she believes her cancer was preventable.

For a 22-year period while living on hay farms in Navarro County, Dyer said she frequently used Roundup.

Several times a week, she said she would fill-up a large tank and spray Roundup along the fence line of her property.

“At the time I didn’t think much of it because it said it was safe,” Dyer said.

Dyer is one of hundreds who are a part of one of the class action lawsuits filed against Monsanto.

### **Monsanto Vice President tells I-Team he’s “confident” glyphosate is safe**

On the campus of Monsanto’s corporate headquarters just outside St. Louis, the company’s vice president, Scott Partridge, told the CBS 11 I-Team

IARC's 2015 finding, that glyphosate is a probable cause of cancer, goes against decades of research.

"Glyphosate has been around for about 40 years. It has a record of safe use over those four decades and has been the most studied agricultural chemical in history," Partridge said.

Monsanto's vice president said IARC "cherry-picked" data to reach its conclusion and openly questioned IARC's political motivation.

"It's not a study. It's an opinion," Partridge said. "It's purely an opinion by them (IARC) and is not supported by an empirical evidence what so ever."

This week Representative Lamar Smith, R-Texas, wrote the director of IRAC a [letter](#) questioning IRAC's "scientific integrity."

Smith, the Chairman of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, also wrote he may be calling on IARC-affiliated individuals to testify in front of the Committee.

### **Lawsuit claims Monsanto executive wrote about "ghostwriting" safety studies in email**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) originally classified glyphosate as a possible cause of cancer in 1985. The EPA changed its mind six years later reclassifying it as safe.

According to court documents, the plaintiffs' lawyers said the EPA's conclusion that glyphosate is safe only came "after pressure from Monsanto."

One lawsuit accuses the company of "ghostwriting" safety studies on glyphosate.

In an [internal email](#) the I-Team obtained from a court filing, one top executive from Monsanto wrote about "us doing the writing" and "they would just edit and sign their names".

When the I-Team asked Partridge if the email was an admission of "ghostwriting" safety studies, he said that would be an "inappropriate way to refer to the work that was done," adding that it was a poorly worded email.

### **After reviewing 200 studies, EPA concludes glyphosate is not a cause of cancer**

In a [2013 letter](#), submitted as evidence to the court, a former EPA scientist of 30 years wrote, "it is essentially certain that glyphosate causes cancer"

That scientist, who was sick and dying at the time, went on to write, "I don't want these serious issues ... to go unaddressed before I go to my grave"

The EPA told the I-Team it looked carefully at the letter but after reviewing 200 studies concludes glyphosate is not a cause of cancer.

The EPA is currently reevaluating the safety of glyphosate. This re-evaluation process occurs every 15 years and is mandated by federal law.

It plans to complete its risk assessment by early 2018.

The EPA said the reevaluation process is routine and was not influenced by recent lawsuits against Monsanto.

### Brian New

Follow @BrianNew CBS

Brian joined the CBS 11 News team in 2013 after working as an investigative reporter for the CBS affiliate in San Antonio. While in South Texas, he was honored with six Lone Star Emmys, including one for his work along the U.S.-Mexico border....

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*The U.S. Supreme Court building. The court refused to hear a local levee board's appeal of a lower court's ruling — ending its lawsuit against more than 90 oil and gas companies.*

U.S. SUPREME COURT

This week on the Coastal News Roundup: legal stuff!

A local levee board's lawsuit against more than 90 oil and gas companies ends after bouncing around in the courts for several years. Plus, the EPA, the federal Department of Justice, and the State of Louisiana reach a settlement with Exxon Mobil, after claiming Exxon's facilities violated the Clean Air Act.

Mark Schleifstein from Nola.com | The Times-Picayune's breaks it all down with WWNO's Travis Lux.



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4:20

*Coastal News Roundup: Lawsuits End, Settlements Reached*

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# EPA chief Pruitt scheduled to meet privately with chemical industry executives

Politics Nov 3, 2017 6:17 PM EST

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration's top environmental regulator is set to speak privately to chemical industry executives next week during a conference at a luxury oceanfront golf resort.

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt is listed as the featured speaker at a board meeting of the American Chemistry Council, a group that has lobbied against stricter regulations for chemical manufacturers. The three-day conference is being held at The Sanctuary resort on Kiawah Island, South Carolina.



## 15 Trump agencies yet to provide travel costs, House panel says

By Hope Yen, Associated Press

Council spokeswoman Anne Kolton said Pruitt's speech will not be open to the public or the news media. Admission to the members-only event where Pruitt is speaking ranges between \$7,500 and \$2,500, depending on sponsorship level. Rooms at the resort are being offered to conference attendees at a discounted rate of \$389 a night, not including taxes and fees.

Travel and lodging expenses for Pruitt, four aides and his security team will be borne by taxpayers.

EPA spokesman Jahan Wilcox declined to provide an estimate of the total cost for the trip, but said the government employees would be staying for the federally mandated room rate of \$135 a night.

Registration fees for Pruitt and his staff were waived since the EPA administrator is an invited speaker. The government employees will not be participating in the golf events scheduled as part of the conference, Wilcox said.

Corporate members of the American Chemistry Council include such industry giants Dow Chemical, DuPont, ExxonMobil, Chevron and Arkema.

A Republican lawyer who previously served as the attorney general of Oklahoma, Pruitt railed against federal environmental regulations he considers too restrictive on the petrochemical industry. Following his appointment to lead EPA, Pruitt has repeatedly intervened to reverse or delay implementation of regulations opposed by chemical and pesticide makers.

“

**Though past EPA administrators have met privately with industry representatives, Pruitt has crisscrossed the country to meet with top executives of industries his agency regulates.**

Pruitt overruled the recommendation of his agency's own scientists to ban the Dow pesticide chlorpyrifos after federal scientists concluded it can interfere with the brain development of fetuses and infants. Pruitt also delayed by until at least 2019 Obama-era rules that would have tightened safety requirements for companies storing large quantities of dangerous chemicals after the industry opposed the regulations.

Pruitt has also named chemical industry insiders to key posts within EPA overseeing chemical and pesticide safety. EPA's top public affairs official, Liz Bowman, worked until March as the director of issue and advocacy communications for the American Chemistry Council.

Though past EPA administrators have met privately with industry representatives, Pruitt has crisscrossed the country to meet with top executives of industries his agency regulates. Unlike past EPA leaders, Pruitt's speaking engagements are typically disclosed only after the fact and are rarely open to the public.

Wilcox said Pruitt's travel schedule is not disclosed ahead of time due to security concerns. His speaking engagement at the Chemistry Council event was revealed in an online agenda posted by the group and first reported by The Washington Post.

EPA's inspector general is reviewing Pruitt's frequent taxpayer-funded trips, which often include weekend layovers at his home in Oklahoma, to determine whether they adhere to federal travel policies.

*By* – Michael Biesecker, Associated Press

Associated Press

# SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN

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## A water economy?

Doug Pushard/For The New Mexican Nov 5, 2017

Some city in the United States will become the water-recycling capital of the country. Why not Santa Fe, New Mexico? This is a logical place to grow this industry. Santa Fe by necessity has a large need for recycled water. We are an area prone to drought. We have a very high ratio of water professionals in our state. These are a few reasons we could become the water-reuse capital of the country.

Why not put programs together to make this an economic engine for the area as well as New Mexico? Israel has used its need for water conservation to grow multibillion-dollar worldwide water businesses. The Water Smart Innovation Conference is held annually in Las Vegas, Nevada, bringing together conservation professionals from around the world. These are examples of how water conservation can be linked to economic vitality.

Why should we care? The history of New Mexico unfortunately is littered with mass migration out of the state due to severe droughts. One doesn't have to look any further than Santa Fe and the severe drought of a couple of decades ago. At that time the City announced that it was running out of water due to lack of supply and the drought. That announcement drove tourism away and hurt the homebuilding industry, which took years to recover. Since then the city has become a leader in water conservation and has greatly diversified our water supply.

So what would a strategy look like? It would mean our state and local economic-development efforts would target people and businesses in this industry. It would mean we put in place programs that highlight existing businesses and attract new ones to our community and state. It would mean we would have centers of excellence. It would mean we would partner with our local education institutions to make sure we're training individuals in these fields, so companies would have ready access to a local workforce. It would mean we put programs promoting Santa Fe and New Mexico as the place to be!

Colorado State University (CSU) is teaming with the National Western Complex for the One Water Solutions Institute, connecting world-class research with real-world solutions. The university plans to complete its water laboratory, which will be a water-reuse showcase, by 2021.

New Mexico could move into a leadership position, resulting in new jobs and the ability to promote the state as having a sustainable long-term water plan. Water is key to our survival in this beautiful, but harsh state. We can lead, follow, or get out of the way. We need to grow local industries to provide good paying jobs for our communities. Why not water, why not here?

*Doug Pushard, founder of the website [www.HarvestH2o.com](http://www.HarvestH2o.com), has designed and installed residential rainwater systems for over a decade. He is a member of the Santa Fe Water Conservation Committee, a lifetime member of the American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association, and an EPA WaterSense Partner. He can be reached at [doug@HarvestH2o.com](mailto:doug@HarvestH2o.com).*

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